



## Housing Advisory Board

# Minutes

Christian Karas – Chair (absent)  
Siri Amrit Kaur Khalsa- Vice Chair

Diana Yazza Devine  
Heather Kay  
Thomas Mace

Steve Schild  
Jon Scott Williams  
Steve Schild  
Linda Starr

**Thursday, August 4, 2011**

6:00 p.m.

Mesa City Council Chambers, Lower Level  
57 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Mesa, Arizona, 85201

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Ms. Linda Starr has been appointed as the newest member of the Housing Advisory Board. Ms. Starr's partial term will be from July 7, 2011 through June 30, 2013. Ms. Starr is the Director of Outreach for East Valley Adult Resources. She holds a bachelor of arts from the University of Illinois. She has served on the Human Services Advisory Board, Taskforce on Homelessness, Mesa Prevention Alliance, and Mesa Agency Networking. She is also a 2003 Mesa LTD graduate.

**II. Approval of Minutes from the May 5, 2011, HAB Meeting**

A motion was made to approve the minutes from May 5, 2011, of the Housing Advisory Board. The motion was seconded. They were approved by a vote of 4-0.

**III. Items from Citizens Present\***

There were not items at this time.

**IV. Public Hearing – First Substantial Amendment to the City of Mesa’s FY 2011/2012 Annual Action Plan**

**A. Motion to Open the Public Hearing.**

- B. Public Comments:** At this time, the general public is encouraged to provide any comments they may have regarding the city’s proposed First Substantial Amendment to its FY 2011/2012 Annual Action Plan. Please complete a blue card in the back of the room and submit it to staff if you wish to speak. Each speaker will have approximately three minutes and must state their name, institutional affiliation (if applicable), and city of residence.

A 30-day public comment period regarding the city’s proposed First Substantial Amendment to its FY 2011/2012 Annual Action Plan began on Thursday, July 21, 2011 and ends on Monday, August 22, 2011. Members of the general public may submit written comments during this time to: The City of Mesa, Housing and Revitalization Division, Attn: Ray Thimesch, Federal Program Administrator, P.O. Box 1466, Mesa, AZ 85211-1466; or, by e-mail to [housing.info@mesaaz.gov](mailto:housing.info@mesaaz.gov). All written comments must be received no later than August 22, 2011 to be considered.

All comments received by the city during the 30-day public comment period will be included in the final version of the First Substantial Amendment submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

**C. Approval and Submission of the First Substantial Amendment:**

Mr. Scott Clapp provided background on the proposed Substantial Amendment. According to the Housing Advisory Report – HUD reduced funding for CDBG and HOME Investment Partnerships Programs. They were reduced by 16.6% for CDBG Program and 11.3% for HOME Program. The FY 2011/2012 Annual Plan was based on these reduced amounts, and the city is now presenting the public with a Substantial Amendment in an attempt to restore project funding to its original allocated amounts. A restoration of all projects and/or categories to their prior levels is not possible due to federal caps or restrictions requirements. There is also a public service cap of 15% based on the CDBG and HOME administration activities are limited to 20% and 10% of the original allocation. Therefore, adjustments have been made in those particular activities to adhere to those caps. The Amendment is requesting the use of \$441, 533 in available prior year CDBG funds and \$141,697 in available prior year HOME funds to restore funding, when possible, to their previously anticipated amount. Specific information regarding the allocation of prior year funds in this Amendment can be found in the attached Housing Advisory Board Report.

At this time, the general public is welcome to make comments regarding the proposed Substantial Amendment.

Ms. Kate Hunt from Mercy Housing Southwest introduced herself to the Board. Mercy Housing has two affordable housing projects within Chris Glover's District 4 in Mesa. Mercy Housing has 13 properties total in Maricopa County that primarily provides affordable housing for extremely low income seniors. Ms. Hunt is aware that there may be a gap in funding that may become available for future allocation, and her purpose today is to request consideration for the use of those funds. Mercy Housing is very unique in the funding they provide to residents and has almost 20 years of service in Mesa.

Mr. Clapp added clarification regarding Ms. Hunt's comments and stated that they are directed at funds not mentioned in the Amendment and/or the meeting Agenda. As such, the Board can receive her comments; but, cannot respond because they are not regarding a current Agenda item. Board member Kay asked if there were any additional prior year funds other than those in the Amendment. Staff indicated there were; but, those funds would be addressed by Council at a later date.

Ms. Albright added that staff is going to go to the Council in September for direction on how to move forward on the application process and how to deal with prior year funds every year. Once direction is received and a plan devised, the first Board it will go before will be the Housing Advisory Board.

Ms. Kay also asked if all prior applicants would be notified of the new process and any additional available funds. Ms Albright indicated that they would. There was one more individual in the audience that wanted to comment on the Substantial Amendment. Her comments are as follows:

Sarah Youngblood from Community Legal Services expressed her support for the Substantial Amendment.

**D. Motion to Close the Public Hearing.**

Motion to close the public hearing portion of the meeting was made, seconded, and approved unanimously by the Board.

At this time, a motion was made to reopen the public hearing and take action on Item V.A. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Another motion was made to close the public hearing. It was seconded and approved unanimously by the Board.

**V. Action Items**

- A. Discuss and Take Action on a Motion Recommending that Council Adopt the First Substantial Amendment to the FY 2011/2012 Annual Action Plan as Submitted.**

1. Motion made and approved (see above).

**B. Discuss and Take Action on a Motion Recommending a Chair of the Housing Advisory Board.**

1. Mr. Christian Karas, the current chair, was unable to attend tonight's meeting. There was some discussion if staff knew if he'd be interested in serving another term as chair. There was also some discussion whether someone else would be interested in serving in this capacity. To give everyone a fair chance to think this over, it was decided to wait until the next meeting to vote for chair. Ms. Devine made a motion to postpone the vote for chair. Mr. Steve Schild seconded her motion, and it was approved unanimously by the Board.

**C. Discuss and Take Action on a Motion Recommending a Vice-Chair of the Housing Advisory Board**

1. The Board can vote on the position of vice-chair without approving a chair at the same time. Due to personal reasons, the current vice-chair, Ms. Siri Amrit Kaur Khalsa, was not interested in serving another term at this time.
2. Ms. Linda Starr volunteered for the position of vice-chair.
3. A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously to appoint Ms. Linda Starr to the position of vice-chair beginning next month.

**VI. Discussion Items**

**A. Discuss and Provide Direction on a Potential Merger of the Housing Advisory and Human Services Advisory Boards.**

1. Ms. Mary Berumen opens discussion regarding merger of both board by introducing herself and Ms. Tammy Albright in their current positions as Director of Housing and Revitalization and Director of Housing and Community Development respectively.

a) Budget cuts

a. Combining boards: For staffing purposes - one stop shop for funding instead of multiple application processes.

b. Overlap on policy direction: Regarding Human Services and Housing Advisory Boards – Board can make recommendations.

2. Ms. Albright adds that it is more beneficial for staffing to present the process as one whole unit instead of multiple units – streamlining the process with an executive summary of all initiatives. Instead of two separate hearings, there will only be one where all the funding pots are presented along with how the money will be dispersed. The Resident Advisory Board will remain separate.

3. Ms. Starr asked how much Human Services money was allocated for non-profits last fiscal year? Ms. Berumen responded that \$650,000.00 was made available in general funds and ABC contributions. This money is important because it can cover the types of activities that most grants do not cover.

4. Ms. Kay asked if the Human Services Advisory Board in favor of such a merger? Ms. Berumen responded that the Human Services Board was amenable to a merger the last time it was brought before them.

5. How would it affect the Board's numbers? Ms. Berumen responded that's something we'd have to discuss with the Mayor's office. Right now we're trying to get a general feel if it's a positive move or not.

6. Some council members have indicated that they want to fund fewer agencies and fund larger "community transformative projects."

7. There was discussion about the pros and cons of combining Boards.

a. Ms. Khalsa added that The Housing Advisory Board was originally formed to look over the overall housing situation for the whole City

across all demographics to figure out what the needs were and assure the citizens would have adequate housing over the next 25 years. Ms. Khalsa suggested that the original vision of the Board would be lost with the combining of both boards. Should there be a new mission statement? Or should we try and focus on the Board's original intent? Ms. Khalsa expressed her frustration with always dealing with funding matters of various non-profits, and she was pretty sure that's not what she signed up for.

- b. Ms. Berumen suggests having a conversation with the Mayor and Council about what they expect from the Housing Advisory Board because they're the ones that set the direction.
- c. Thomas Mace suggests that the Mission Statement be discussed at the next meeting before deciding on combining both Boards.
- d. Mr. Mace sees the logic of combining both Boards.
- e. Ms. Berumen – HUD requires that we present it before a public board.
- f. Ms. Khalsa comments about affordable housing and how zoning changes have affected Mesa.
- g. Mr. Thimesch suggests checking out the future plans that are available online.
- h. Ms. Berumen asked of all the topics, which one would you like to have presented to you at the next meeting?
- i. Ms. Albright suggested a retreat for combined Boards with focus groups and mission statement.
- j. Ms. Starr suggested going to one or two of the Human Services Board meetings before making a decision.
- k. Ms. Berumen – the Mayor receives recommendations from the Board whether or not to combine and makes the final decision.
- l. Ms. Kay suggested at the next meeting to have discussion on the Mission Statement and how it would affect both Boards.
- m. What happens to other communities where they don't have a housing board to take HUD funding recommendations to? Don't they get dealt with there? Ms. Khalsa stated that she wasn't appointed by the Mayor to make funding decisions for our local nonprofits. She was appointed to the Housing Board to make sure the City had adequate housing stock for all of its different demographic groups over the next 25 years.
- n. Ms. Berumen summed up the discussion items for future agenda items:
  - Mission and vision statement
  - Update on where the funding went
- o. Ms. Khalsa suggested the following as future items of discussion:
  - Demographics updates
  - Income levels
  - Homelessness levels
  - Foreclosure levels
  - Estimates of those displaced from their homes
  - Data on people of various generations moving into one home again

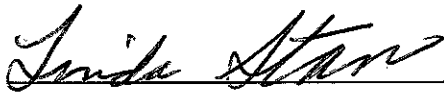
- p. Ms. Berumen indicated that kind of data would come from multiple sources.
- q. Ms. Albright – The 2010 census data is just now being made available. Where hoping when they roll that out, it gives us a more accurate picture of Mesa's composition.
  - Low to moderate income levels, etc.

**VII. Staff Reports and Announcements**

- A. None at this time

**VIII. Adjourn**

- A. Motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.



Linda Starr, Vice Chair

---

November 10, 2011